

Planning and Development Department
Land Use Planning Division
1947 Center Street
Berkeley CA 94704

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #4 Summary

Ashby + North Berkeley BART Zoning and Development Parameters

Date + Time: December 14, 2020 at 6 pm

Location: Online via Zoom Webinar virtual meeting

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Updates and Process Overview
3. Zoning and Development Standards Parameters
4. Building Form: Design Standards/Guidelines
5. Desired Uses, Community Amenities and Locations
6. Next Steps
7. Public Comment

Attendance

There were 14 out of 15 CAG members in attendance as well as over 70 members from the public. The following members of the project team (City, BART and consultants) made presentations or helped answer questions during the meeting:

City

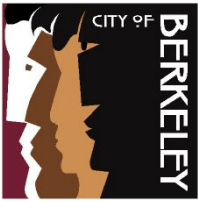
- Alisa Shen - Principal Planner

BART

- Abby Thorne-Lyman - TOD Director
- Rachel Factor – Principal Planner

Consultants

- Karen Murray - Van Meter Williams Pollack (VMWP)
- Dave Javid - Plan to Place
- Rick Jacobus - Street Level Advisor



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MEETING SUMMARY

The purpose of CAG Meeting #4 was to provide an overview of the zoning parameters, including an overview of potential building form design standards and guidelines, as well as the regulation of building uses to spur discussion with the CAG. The following notes summarize the main agenda items, presentations and discussions.

Updates and Process Overview

Alisa Shen provided an overview of the project, updates on the process, and a timeline of outreach activities to date. Members of the CAG had no comments or questions.

Zoning and Development Parameters

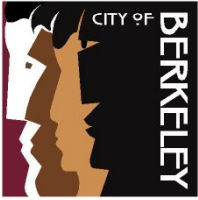
Karen Murray presented an overview of zoning and development standards by detailing AB2923, summarizing the informational “Housing 101” videos that were produced for the CAG, and exploring the relationships between building form and residential density. Members of the CAG made the following comments :

- Describe the parameters that can allow for various constraints including unit size and number of bedrooms
- Share more information on the guidance zoning can have on building form, including specific parameters on vertical circulation, courtyard size, and single vs. double loaded corridors;
- Share the results of San José’s mayoral low-income housing model; and
- Encourage out-of-the-box thinking

Building Form: Design Standards and Guidelines

Karen Murray presented an overview of how design standards and guidelines can influence the physical form of buildings. She provided a visual example of how standards could influence a hypothetical project at the North Berkeley with a special emphasis on building height. Members of the CAG made the following comments:

- Design standards and guidelines should consider building interiors, not just building exteriors and the appearance; (2)
- Study and present how a hypothetical, well-placed modular tower could impact finance, shadows, and density (2)
- Provide floor area ratio (FAR) numbers and how FAR impacts contextual design (2)
- Explain how zoning can regulate ground floor uses; prioritize housing over commercial/retail use
- Provide information on the relationship between building material and buildable heights



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- Provide a more detailed explanation of density bonus regulations

Following the building form presentation, the CAG (and public) were asked to join three virtual breakout rooms to further discuss the topic. Given that it was a CAG meeting, the discussion was limited to CAG members, while meeting participants observed). Below is a summary of the key themes or questions that were raised by the CAG during the small group exercise (*see the Appendix and project website for an image of the virtual platform that includes all of the input received*):

Stepdowns

Buildings should step down at project edges, particularly across from existing homes

Architectural Variety

Both sites should have a variety of architectural styles and forms so there is not a homogeneous feel to the new buildings.

Ground Floor Treatment

Ground floor frontages should be active and provide interest and character regardless of use.

Quality of Life

Larger building forms should be balanced with quality of life, ie. light, privacy, comfort, circulation, safety, accessibility)

Building Height

Taller, narrower buildings might be acceptable in certain locations to allow for more shaping of the buildings at the edges.

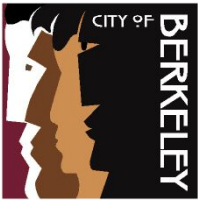
Community Input

Existing, potential and returning residents should have input on the types of development that would best serve the community.

Desired Uses, Community Amenities and Locations

Following the first break out session, the meeting continued with an overview presentation of desired uses the community identified in previous planning efforts. The CAG made the following comments::

- Clarify map elements and modify graphics to match current discussions
- Describe the constraints with Ashby's "Open to Below" sections



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- Describe the constraints currently represented by Adeline
- Gather insight from developers on the feasibility of unit sizes represented at Ashby
- Consider ADA redundant elevators for increased access

Following the building form presentation, the CAG (and public) again were asked to join three virtual breakout rooms to further discuss this topic. Given that it was a CAG meeting, the discussion was limited to CAG members, while meeting participants observed. Below is a summary of the key themes or questions that were raised by the CAG during this small group exercise (*see the Appendix and project website for an image of the virtual platform that includes all of the input received*):

Ashby Station

Adeline Street Reconfiguration

Consider the potential for transformation of Adeline into a prime Berkeley public space. (Adeline configured as a two-lane street with wide sidewalks, park strips, and plaza space). It's important to make any Adeline frontage successful with activity, uses, and building configuration.

Flea Market / Outdoor Public Gathering Spaces

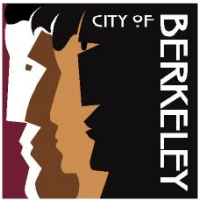
Create a central “heart” that is a sunny, car-free space that can accommodate the Flea Market surrounded by active ground floor uses. Public outdoor spaces should include green spaces in addition to paved plaza spaces. Green spaces are much needed in this area.

Support Local Businesses

Provide space for non-profit community organizations and services. Consider the proposal for the Ed Roberts Campus sports facility / housing for disabled community members. Include amenities that serve both commuters and residents such as childcare or corner stores. New uses should complement and support existing uses, such as the theater

Theme: Identity

Define the site as an accessible arts district. Locate a new community hub with cultural space centrally to the development. Ensure new uses and amenities are welcoming to the entire community to help curb gentrification.



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Theme: Accessibility

Prioritize pedestrian safety and comfort. And ground floor residential units should be fully accessible. Include car share and bike share amenities.

Theme: Policies

Implement a right-to-return policy for residents and for small businesses, with emphasis on displaced minority-owned businesses. Inform what uses and amenities should be prioritized by creating a clear anti-displacement and anti-gentrification plan.

North Berkeley

Theme: Commercial Uses

Do not prioritize commercial uses; commercial spaces should be limited due to the site's proximity to University Avenue. Include amenities that serve both commuters and residents such as childcare or corner stores.

Theme: Ohlone Greenway / Central Public Gathering Spaces

Provide a portion of the Ohlone Greenway frontage with community services, organizations, and/or small retail

Theme: Active Use Locations

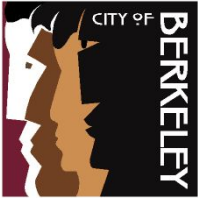
Ensure an active ground floor frontage along 100% of Sacramento. This is compatible with the busy nature of the street and its proximity to Ohlone Middlefield Park.

Theme: Accessibility

Focus on bike and active transportation mode amenities such as bike parking, e-bike charging, bike repair/tools, or a bike information kiosk. Consider alternative public transit options like smaller buses for Berkeley hills residents. Avoid the potential for overflow parking in adjacent neighborhood streets by providing on-site parking.

Theme: Identity

Ensure a sense of community by creating smaller blocks with multiple buildings instead of "big blocks". Include uses that encourage engagement between new and existing residents to establish a sense of welcoming. May include cafes, service centers, community gardens, or childcare.



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Next Steps

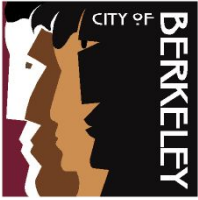
Prior to public comment for each meeting, the project team discussed future engagement opportunities including an opportunity to email or mail additional comments through December 28th, additional office hours sessions (December 16th and 21st) and the next CAG meeting, planned for either March or April and a Community Meeting in January or February.

At the conclusion of this section, Rachel Factor from BART provided an overview of BART's Access and Infrastructure studies, including the CalTrans Richmond-line Corridor TOD Access Study, the Adeline Corridor "Road Diet" Study, and Station Specific Access Plans.

Public Comments

The following are notes from the public comments received from the approximately 35 meeting participants who provided comments.

- Reduce building heights to a maximum of 4 stories in the center fading to 2 stories on the perimeter with setbacks of the North Berkeley Bart Station with no retail and commercial in ground floor use (18)
- Reconsider not having a plan on parking and address competitive resident street parking (7)
- Increase density and heights with stepdowns to provide maximum space for new tenants and reduce social inequities (6)
- Increase green spaces between streets and sidewalks for multi-use and as green wall and roofs (2)
- Invest in connected transit to eliminate NB BART parking needs (2)
- Clarify FAR implications on heights
- Share graphics that are representative, relevant, and clear
- Consider shifting parking to other stations to alleviate pressure on NB space
- Increase affordability over 20%
- Get creative with building form
- Consider ownership instead of renters
- Consider housing local teachers in affordable units
- Repair Adeline for increased safety and vibrancy
- Diversify community uses for optimized flexibility
- Reflect on biases, including developer bias, in video series
- Consider the influence of developers and money during this process
- Support the Adaptive Recreation Facility proposed for Ed Roberts Campus



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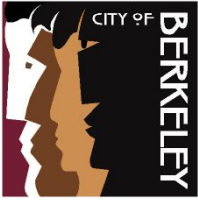
Adjournment

The meetings adjourned at 9:50pm. Additional comments are accepted through December 28th by email and mail.

Via email:
bartplanning@cityofberkeley.info

Or via mail:
City of Berkeley Planning and Building Department
1947 Center Street 2nd Floor,
Berkeley CA, 94704 (Attn: Alisa Shen)

For more information, please visit: www.cityofberkeley.info/bartplanning.



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APPENDIX

Emails received from October 31, 2020 to December 28, 2020.